

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
2163 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

April 2, 2004

VOTE "NO" ON THE BRADLEY AMENDMENT

Dear Colleague:

The House will vote today on an amendment we debated yesterday that would allow heavier, more damaging and more dangerous trucks on Interstate Highways in the state of New Hampshire. I strongly oppose this amendment and I urge you to vote "No" on it.

Why should you care about an amendment that increases truck weights in only one state? **Because all taxpayers – my constituents and yours – will be forced to pay for most of the significantly increased infrastructure damage these heavier trucks would cause on *federally funded* Interstate Highways.**

One 80,000-pound truck already causes as much pavement damage as 9,600 cars. That number would rise exponentially on Interstates in New Hampshire if the 99,000-pound trucks authorized by this amendment are permitted. Interstate highway bridges would take an even greater pounding. A USDOT study on the bridge impacts of heavier trucks showed just how staggering the results would be. If every state got what New Hampshire wants it would result in \$319 billion in new bridge costs – \$53 billion in repairs and \$266 billion in extra fuel burnt and lost time and productivity for drivers caught in traffic because of bridge repair or replacement projects.

And this would all be subsidized – the trucks this amendment envisions would pay just 40 percent of their highway costs, leaving taxpayers in Florida, California, Alabama – and everywhere else across the country to pick up most of the tab.

Moreover, how can we say "yes" to New Hampshire and "no" to everyone else? The truck size and weight issue is a Pandora's Box that we do not want to open. Perhaps that is why two trade associations that never see eye-to-eye on these issues – the American Trucking Associations and the Association of American Railroads – agreed to support the truck size and weight status quo in this reauthorization.

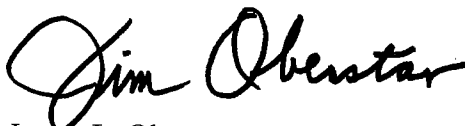
Also Opposing Heavier Trucks Are:

International Association of Chiefs of Police
National Troopers Coalition
International Brotherhood of Police Officers
International Brotherhood of Teamsters
Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO

National Association of EMTs
National Sheriffs Association
AAA
Advocates for Highway and Auto
Safety

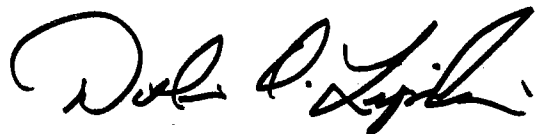
This weight exemption would also be dangerous for motorists. Heavier single tractor-trailers are more susceptible to rolling over and experiencing braking problems. Studies by the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute found a direct correlation that as truck weight increases, the number of fatal accidents increases.

Please Vote "No" on the Bradley amendment. A "No" vote is a vote for highway safety, against greater destruction of federally funded infrastructure and to protect your constituents from an unfair new tax burden.



James L. Oberstar
Ranking Democratic Member
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure

Sincerely,



William O. Lipinski
Ranking Democratic Member
Subcommittee on Highways
and Transit